



MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Date: Thursday, July 13, 2006

Purpose: Citizen Advisory Committee Meeting

Distribution: CAC Members, Project Development Team, public

From: Vicki Guarino, RVCOG

Prepared by: Pat Foley, RVCOG

CAC Attendees: Irving Citron, Jay Eastwood, Alex Grossi, Deanie Manning, Suzanne Myers, Jim Rafferty, Randy Repp, Bart Van Syoc and Ron Wright

CAC Absent: Rowdy Bates and Janine Law

Project Team Attendees: Jason Sheadel, ODOT Roadway
Debbie Timms, ODOT Project Leader
Jerry Marmon, ODOT Environmental Project Manager
Dorothy Upton, ODOT TPAU
Angela Findley, Parsons Brinckerhoff Consultant Project Manager
Connie Kratovil, Parsons Brinckerhoff
Vicki Guarino, RVCOG
Pat Foley, RVCOG

Other Attendees: Laurel Samson, PDT and
19 members of the public

1. Call to Order/Review Agenda/Approve Minutes

Vicki Guarino, RVCOG

Vicki called the meeting to order. She reviewed the agenda and asked if there were any changes to the June 8, 2006 minutes. Jim Rafferty added a comment regarding the last meeting which is not considered a change in the minutes. Jim feels that the proposed barrier on Highway 199 is a whole lot different than the barrier on I-5 because of the difference in speed limits and traffic congestion. The minutes were approved as written.

2. Update on June 9 Project Development Team Meeting

Irv Citron, CAC Vice-Chair

Irv reported that the PDT meeting followed the same format as the CAC meeting with the exception of the safety presentation. Angela Findley said that the PDT agreed with the CAC's recommendation to continue looking at Alternative C.

3. Examine information requested at May meeting

Vicki introduced Laurel Samson, PDT member representing the city of Grants Pass.

Laurel said that people have telephoned the City Manager asking about the suggested Boulevard Concept as was reported in the Daily Courier. At this time it is just a concept. This concept will be studied more thoroughly in the future, especially in the congested area from Allen Creek Road to Tussey. The concept has features such as landscaping, median strips, trees and shrubs which are meant to send a message to travelers that this is an urban area with slower speeds. The City will be working with ODOT to determine possible options to make this area attractive, welcoming, and business friendly. Laurel added that the city and ODOT are applying for a \$500K grant to supplement monies to look at landscaping and bicycle/pedestrian improvements starting at Allen Creek and extending west.

4. Construction Phasing for Alternatives

Connie Kratovil, Parsons Brinckerhoff
Jason Sheadel, ODOT

Connie started by telling the group that the west section (West 6) alternative is still a part of the process and is still added to all of the east section alternatives. There are three concepts for the east section that will be discussed at tonight's meeting. Also, a phasing plan for each alternative will be discussed. The east alternatives have been renamed: East 1 changed to Alternative A; East 5B changed to Alternative B; and East C changed to Alternative C.

Connie explained potential east section work to be done in Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the project for each of the three alternatives. Work done in Phase 1 would benefit the current transportation system and meet the purpose and need of the project. Phase 2 work would increase this benefit, but it will be coordinated with the South Y planning process.

**Maps of the alternatives were distributed*

Alternative A – Phase 1

Highway 199 will have three lanes in each direction. The frontage road no longer connects Allen Creek Road to Ringuette Street. Instead, an access road now starts at Allen Creek Road and provides access to the YMCA and the fairgrounds. Without the original frontage road there are now concerns regarding driveways still directly accessing Highway 199 from the fairgrounds entrance to Tussey Lane. The maps now show (north side of Highway 199) three travel lanes, an eight foot shoulder, curb, an eight foot planter strip and a six foot sidewalk. After the access point for the fairgrounds off of Highway 199, the new proposed access road would have two twelve foot travel lanes plus shoulders. There is approximately an eighteen foot area just west of the fairgrounds entrance and between Highway 199 and the access road that other improvements, including landscaping, may be added. A one-way slip ramp (westbound) from Highway 199 connects to Allen Creek Road. Driveway accesses are shown on the maps and will be discussed later in the meeting when the committee examines larger maps.

Discussion:

Bart Van Syoc asked if the eighteen foot area depicted on the map was large enough to accommodate some form of rapid transit (bus pullout or an area during the fair for the trolley to drop people off). Connie said that there is room for a pullout but a lot of greenery would have to be sacrificed. This is a design detail that will be studied later in the process.

Jason Sheadel said that a meeting with the County and some of the Fair Board members was held three weeks ago where the proposed access road to the fairgrounds was presented. They will get back to ODOT by the end of the month with their comments.

Pedestrian access to the fairgrounds was explained.

Alternative A – Phase 2

As explained earlier, this phase will be coordinated with the South Y study.

Alternative B – Phase 1

The major difference between Alternative A and B is the access road extends to Ringuette Street. This is because of the cost of the bridge overpass. The cost is such that without the access road extending to serve a larger area, there would be too little public benefit to the bridge.

The north side of Highway 199 from Tussey Lane to Ringuette Street is the same as Alternative A. A sidewalk would extend to Allen Creek Road.

Alternative B – Phase 2

Potential future construction will be coordinated with the South Y study.

Alternative C – Phase 1

This alternative is similar to Alternative A Phase 1. On this alternative the slip ramp has been tightened and the large bulb out has been eliminated. Potential accesses to properties around the north side of Highway 199/Allen Creek Road are shown on the maps.

Alternative C – Phase 2

Potential future construction will be coordinated with the South Y study.

Discussion:

Deanie Manning asked what property purchases are needed for the alternatives. Connie said that will be analyzed during the environmental study in detail. The committee will be able to see impacted properties when they examine the larger maps later in the meeting.

Jerry Marmon said the CAC is being asked to look at the alternatives as a whole concept to determine which alternatives are liked or disliked. This will help determine which alternatives should be studied further. Detailed analysis will be done during the environmental analysis.

Jim Rafferty commented on the amount of traffic lights. Connie explained the reasoning for, and operation of, each signal.

Alex Grossi said that between the last meeting and this meeting, everything that had worked on has been resketched and things of value have been thrown away. He went on to ask, “Why are we spending millions of dollars to access the fairgrounds backwards, when all we have to do is move the entrance to the fairgrounds to Ringuette?” Connie replied by saying that there is an attempt to minimize impacts to businesses along Highway 199. With the South Y study coming, the proposed plan should complement what may be proposed. We also need to address safety issues within the confines of this project.

Pedestrian/Bicycle Connections

Connie showed a slide addressing the in place, and proposed pedestrian/bicycle connections. Connie explained how the connections are proposed to operate.

Break

5. Review Preliminary Access Plans

Connie Kratovil, Parsons Brinckerhoff
Jason Sheadel, ODOT

Large maps showing potential accesses for Alternatives A, B and C were set up for display. The CAC and members of the public were invited to review maps and make comments. Staff recorded comments and answered questions.

6. Alternative Evaluation and Recommendations

Angela Findley, Parsons Brinckerhoff
**Handout – Updated Evaluation Matrix*

Angela referred to the updated Evaluation Matrix which addresses the Phase 1 build-out only. Some data has been revised to reflect changes to proposed alternatives. The data shown are the result of the Project Team’s attempt to rate the components of the Alternatives. She told the CAC that if they have different thoughts on what the ratings should be, those ideas will be noted. She went on to explain the meaning of the symbols used for the ratings: black circle – lowest rating, half black half white circle - medium

rating, white circle – highest (best) rating. Angela did not review each rating; she focused on explaining on ratings that differed among the alternatives.

Discussion, comments and questions:

Ron Wright asked what is the percentage difference between (referring to Operations; volume/capacity ratios for expressway – Allen Creek Road at Hwy 199) 0.91 and 0.94? Is there a dramatic effect or are the ratios significantly the same thing? Angela replied that there is not a significant difference.

Alex Grossi remarked that Alternative B is still being rated but the end result shows that it is not phaseable or fundable. If this alternative cannot be built, why is it still on the list? Angela said that this is the big differentiator for Alternative B. She went on to say that all alternatives are phaseable for the combined Phase 1 and 2 build. The matrix being discussed tonight is for Phase 1 only. Alternatives A and C can be built in parts under Phase 1; Alternative B would need additional funding to begin construction on Phase 1. A discussion ensued on the availability of funds in the next funding cycle.

Jim Rafferty said that during the review of the maps, it was suggested by a member of the public to look at another north-south route some place between Allen Creek and Dowell rather than focusing all of the traffic at Allen Creek. Connie said that this suggestion was noted. John Christianson said that he made this suggestion because businesses are being chopped up. There is a three acre field next to Southern Oregon Sanitation not being used.

Public Comment:

Vicki Guarino asked members of the public if they would like to make comments on the alternatives before the CAC voted on their recommendations.

Buck Baker: Buck has lived in the area for along time. He is interested in the project addressing safety. He likes the slip ramp. He said he owns the property on the corner of Highway 199 and Allen Creek where Walgreens is proposed to be built. His property will be greatly affected by the alternatives. He thinks that Alternative A is better than Alternative B.

Geoff Farrer: His property is located on Highway 199 and Allen Creek (Redwood Market - across from the property owned by Buck Baker). The only alternative that works for him is Alternative A. Alternative C will cause the loss of the market building and the access points, from a commercial point, would not make it viable. Alternative B's access points are not viable for commercial development. He has had a lot of inquiries from fast food franchises, namely Del Taco and Arby's. He was asked if the Redwood Market will continue to operate. Geoff said that the Redwood Market has asked for an extension of their lease. He feels that the market has lost a lot of their business to Albertsons. He does not feel that the market is the highest and best use from a community standpoint. He was asked if the building is an issue. He replied that the building still has a value. Access is the big issue.

David Roberts: He asked if a decision was going to be made tonight regarding which alternative will be selected. Angela explained the process, CAC makes recommendations

and the PDT will make the decision on which alternatives to study further in detail. The Environmental Assessment with detailed studies will be released to the public for comment. After the public gives their comments, FHWA will then make a decision. He wanted to know if there would be more ideas presented. Angela went on to say that the three alternatives are the result of one and a half year's study by the CAC and PDT.

Gerrie Anderson: She asked how many years the South Y Study would take. Jerry Marmon replied that the study will probably take a couple of years to complete. The fix for the South Y is not funded. Funding will need to be secured which would put construction at least five to ten years out. Gerrie owns the Piper Drive In. In order to get a tenant she has to know what is going on. She also addressed the access issue off of Highway 199.

Loree Arthur: Loree is on the Urban Area Planning Commission. She said they have been trying to make the connectivity of the fourth bridge work in the transportation plan. They have been making builders along Lincoln Avenue and across to the north of F Street put in rail road crossings and face their subdivisions in a certain direction to accommodate the future fourth bridge routes. At this time she is not sure which alternative provides the best connectivity. Ron Wright, Chair of the Josephine County Rural Planning Commission, said they also have done the 20 year study. The CAC has evaluated the fourth bridge and found that it does not meet the requirements of this project.

John: He is concerned about the growth in the area and its affect on the transportation system. He asked if the growth rate for the future has been calculated and taken into consideration. The traffic in the area is deplorable now. Angela asked John which alternative, in his opinion, would perform better for continued growth. He replied that he wants to know if the thirty year growth rate has been addressed. He was told that the growth rate has been addressed.

Tamerie Mesman: Tamerie feels that Alternative B is definitely bad for her business. She is in favor of Alternative C.

Jim Rafferty asked if the public could be polled on the preferred alternative. Alternative A seemed to be the favorite. There were also some who liked Alternative C. Nobody liked Alternative B.

CAC Alternative Recommendations

Angela asked the committee if they were ready to make their recommendations. The group agreed that they were.

Each Alternative was voted upon. A "Yes" vote is a recommendation to forward the alternative into the Environmental Assessment. A "No" vote is a recommendation to drop the alternative from further study.

Alternative A	6 Yes	3 No
Alternative B	0 Yes	9 No
Alternative C	8 Yes	1 No

The above recommendations will be presented to the PDT at the tomorrow's meeting.

7. Next Steps

Angela Findley, Parsons Brinkerhoff

The detailed environmental impact studies will take about three months to complete. The staff will be ready to present the study results in October at the regular CAC and PDT meetings. In the meantime it was decided that at a minimum a monthly email will be sent to the CAC to keep them updated on the project. The CAC would like to know if and when meetings are to be held with the County, City or the Fair Board and the outcomes for each. The group would like to know what the PDT decides at tomorrow's meeting. An update will be posted on the project's website.

8. Public Comment

Vicki Guarino, RVCOG

Vicki asked if members of the public had further comments.

Loree Arthur: She said that nobody on the Planning Commission believes the comment that the closing of Willow has had no impact on Redwood Avenue. In the last two months the Commission has shifted from planning for the future to dealing only with appeals. They all have to do with the traffic in the Willow area. The Willow intersection (signalization and crossing) is the one area that the Commission hopes will be revisited.

9. CAC Comfort Check

Vicki Guarino, RVCOG

Jim Rafferty: Jim commented on information he heard at his store. In Europe there is a traffic light system that flashes three times (green light ready to turn yellow). The flashing allows the big rigs some warning that there is a traffic change is coming up. This system has worked well in Europe and is starting to come to the States. He feels that we could be on the leading edge if this idea could be brought to the attention of the agency that is in charge of signals. He is comfortable with the meeting but is still in favor of the traffic lights at the fairgrounds and Willow and no barriers.

Alex Gross: He is okay. He appreciates having the ability to vent his frustrations.

Jay Eastwood: He is fine.

Ron Wright: He is good. He just wants more information.

Suzanne Myers: She is thrilled that the City and ODOT have been talking about landscaping. She agrees with Jim regarding having a light at Willow and not having barriers.

Irv Citron: He is good.

Randy Repp: He feels things are good.

Deanie Manning: She is feeling better about the process.

Bart Van Syoc: The landscaping ideas that were discussed tonight are interesting. He likes the Jersey Barrier.

10. Wrap Up/Adjourn

Vicki Guarino, RVCOG

The next meeting will be on October 12, 2006.