



## DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

**Meeting Date:** Thursday, March 10, 2005

**Purpose:** Citizen Advisory Committee Meeting

**Distribution:** CAC Members  
Project Development Team

**From:** Vicki Guarino, RVCOG

**Prepared by:** René Sjothun, RVCOG

**Date Prepared:** March 14, 2005

**CAC Attendees:** Rowdy Bates, Irving Citron, Jay Eastwood, Alex Grossi, Janine Law, Deanie Manning, Suzanne Myers, Jim Rafferty, Randy Repp, Bart Van Syoc, Ron Wright

**CAC Absent:** None

**Project Team Attendees:** Jerry Marmon, ODOT Environmental Project Manager  
Eryca McCartin, ODOT Project Manager  
Jason Sheadel, ODOT Roadway  
Brian Sheadel, ODOT Design  
Dorothy Upton, ODOT TPAU  
Gary Leaming, ODOT Public Information  
Angela Findley, Parsons Brinckerhoff Consultant Project Manager  
Connie Kratovil, Parson Brinckerhoff  
Vicki Guarino, RVCOG

**Project Team Absent:** John Vial, ODOT District 8 Manager  
Pat Foley, RVCOG

**Other Attendees:** 9 members of the public

## **1. Call to Order/Introductions**

Vicki Guarino, RVCOG Facilitator

Guarino called the meeting to order at 6 p.m. She said this is a working meeting. There will be some detailed presentations and then the CAC will finish up the draft of the project purpose statement. The CAC will also begin work on the project goals and objectives.

## **2. Update Information**

Gary Leaming, ODOT

More than 80 people attended the Open House. There were various information stations staffed by team members who answered questions and gave an overview of the project to interested members of the public.

The accident that occurred on February 22<sup>nd</sup> at Hwy 199 and Arbor Ridge was discussed. A pregnant woman was killed and her fetus was lost. Access into Arbor Ridge off the state highway was approved in 2003, before there were a lot of the crash problems in the area. Leaming said John Vial from ODOT gave a presentation last month on KAJO radio in which he explained that adding a turn lane into Arbor Ridge would cost about one half million dollars. When access was approved there were only eight home sites in this area. If there are any additional changes at Arbor Ridge, or any other roadway in this area, the district will require a turn lane or a raised median to prevent cross turning movements.

## **3. Review and Approval of Minutes**

Vicki Guarino, RVCOG

The draft minutes were approved.

## **4. Elect CAC Chairperson**

Vicki Guarino, RVCOG

Guarino said the primary job of the chairperson is to represent the CAC at the PDT meetings. The PDT meets on Friday morning at 9 a.m. following the Thursday evening CAC meeting. The chairperson also serves as a contact point person in the community. Rowdy Bates was elected chairperson and Irving Citron was elected vice chairperson.

## **5. Master Project Schedule**

Eryca McCartin, ODOT

McCartin reviewed the master project schedule. This schedule was passed out to all attendees and reviewed. The goal is to get the NEPA process completed by the summer of 2006 so that construction could begin in 2009. Funding is tied to this schedule. If the funding is not used as scheduled, it could be taken away.

There is a mandated process for right-of-way acquisitions. For this size project it could take 2-3 years. This project is on an aggressive timeline. The detailed design will be done while the right-of-way is being completed.

Jim Rafferty asked if something can be done in the interim, or do we have to wait until 2009? Response: It depends. If part of the solution was some education effort, it might be done sooner. But for the most part the amount of work that can be done is tied to the funding for dirt, asphalt, striping, etc.

Alex Grossi asked if federal highway approval is in the wrong order, before the detailed design? Response: Federal Highway Administration approval is part of the environmental process; detail design begins after that approval.

Jim Rafferty asked about the space in the project area between Midway and Redwood Avenue, suggesting that the section between those roads should be part of this project. Response: The intersection at Redwood Avenue was added because a potential solution could involve pushing traffic onto Redwood Avenue, but that would not affect the section of Highway 199 between the Redwood Avenue intersection and the Midway intersection. The project area along Hwy. 199 ends at Midway because this is the area where the accidents have been.

Bart Van Syoc asked if the city representatives on the PDT are going to be working with the project. Response: City coordination is required. The city has given money for this project. We are going to do whatever makes the best sense. But the city has only one vote.

Deanie Manning asked about installation of a median. Response: At Arbor Ridge, if there is more development on that road, if an appeal or application would come to ODOT, some kind of major change there may be required.

Irving Citron and Alex Grossi asked about interim work vs. the need for rights-of-way, a long-term solution and communication between rural planning and urban planning. Response: Some of the design and traffic elements will need to be considered by ODOT technical personnel. Some changes may happen before this project is completed, and the highway may have to be changed again as a result of this project. However, some of the near-term changes may complement this project

McCartin introduced Connie Kratovil, from Parsons Brinckerhoff. She has roadway design expertise and she will be attending most of the CAC meetings in place of Mike Arneson who recently left ODOT.

## **6. Introduction to Design**

Brian Sheadel, ODOT

Sheadel presented a PowerPoint on design, and slides were distributed to CAC members. At the beginning of the design process, the ideas will be very broad. The designs will be conceptual.

He asked CAC members give him a list of design aspects: Meeting driver expectations; functionality; meeting pedestrian needs; additional capacity; traffic flow; safety accessibility for all; affordability (being within budget); serving multi-modal needs.

Other concerns that the CAC expressed were: compatibility with Grants Pass' future urban growth boundary; pedestrian friendly, noise; business friendly right-of-way; environmental justice; aesthetics; natural resources; right-of-way and relocations; land owner and city/county coordination. Sheadel pointed out potential conflicts between the various concerns and said the decision-making process will involve finding the balance between, for example, accessibility and safety, and noise and capacity. The key will be to come up with balance.

The CAC also produced a list of areas of expertise: roadway; traffic; pavement; structures; geo-tech; signals; right-of-way; survey; hydraulics; environmental (biological, historical and archaeological resources).

The CAC had concerns that Hwy 199 is designated as an expressway yet at this time it does not move traffic as an expressway. Dorothy Upton explained that the Oregon Transportation Commission realizes that there are roads that don't necessarily meet the expressway standards, but are viewed as having that function. Highway 199 was designated as an expressway three years ago. This project needs to come as close as possible to accommodating this highway as an expressway. This will be criteria that the CAC needs to consider.

Sheadel explained that it is good to be creative and to develop innovative solutions. It is okay to ask "why" as the answers will not only give an answer to the person with the questions but to the whole group.

## **7. Introduction to Traffic Issues**

Dorothy Upton, ODOT

Upton referred to a PowerPoint presentation. Slides were distributed to the CAC describing many issues that are taken into consideration.

She said that when looking at doing the traffic portion of a project, ODOT tries to make sure there is good problem identification. They will get the actual numbers, forecast the growth, do the evaluation of alternatives and will also help on the design details of the preferred alternative.

She presented information about the data collected, as well as the modeling analysis procedures.

## **8. Draft Purpose and Need Statement**

Angela Findley, Parsons Brinckerhoff

Findley noted the strong response from the CAC and PDT in preparing the Purpose and Need worksheet. All comments have been compiled to provide a summary, which was distributed to the CAC. It included a synopsis of everyone's comments. The draft purpose statement reads:

**“The purpose of the project is to address vehicular and pedestrian safety, and current and future congestion and operational deficiencies, along Highway 199 between Tussey Lane and Midway Avenue.”**

She said that after listening to the presentations on design and traffic, it’s clear that a lot of the ideas that people put forward really factor into the word “congestion,” which ties into the volume to capacity ratio.

We are focusing on both vehicular and pedestrian safety in the Hwy 199 corridor.

The next pages of the handout categorized the comments. Comments are broken down into several categories, some are called needs and others are moved forward to be used in the next assignment, the development of goals and objectives. There are five categories from the comments received: Crashes, Access, Growth, Capacity and Congestion and System Efficiency. Project staff are looking at facts now. Solutions will come when the project starts looking at alternatives. Findley asked if anyone felt there was a comment that she missed. No one offered a comment.

She reviewed each category that was listed on a PowerPoint presentation. (Handouts of each slide presentation were given out.) The next step is to condense these comments into concise statements backed up with facts. The purpose and need statement will be written up and presented at the next meeting for approval. Angela thanked everyone for their hard work. Jerry Marmon added that this is a very important piece of this project. As it is written, the project will focus on *safety and congestion*. This will act as the first filter when considering alternatives. That means that this team is not going to be looking at alternates that do not:

1. Reduce the number of crashes
2. Reduce congestion

## **9. Introduction to Goals and Objectives**

Angela Findley, Parsons Brinckerhoff

Goals and objectives of the project also have to be identified as part of the alternatives development process. These are factors that go beyond what is in the purpose and need statement. This is where we start to balance the transportation and environmental issues. Angela reviewed this process on her PowerPoint presentation. (Handouts of each slide presentation were given out.)

## **10. Next Steps**

Angela, Findley, Parsons Brinckerhoff

The next assignment is to finalize the purpose and need statement as well as refine the project’s goals and objects. A worksheet to brainstorm goals and objectives has been given out as a handout and will also be emailed to everyone in the near future. Responses are to be returned to Vicki Guarino no later than April 5<sup>th</sup>.

Findley also reviewed the meeting schedule for the next six months, which was distributed at the first meeting.

## **11. Public Comment**

Vicki Guarino, RVCOG

Art Peary: His question was about Hwy 199 and improvement at the interchange that is in the works to change the routing. He would like to know what is going to be done with this overpass area.

Response: This area is going to be a very large fix and is called the South Y. We are talking about a very large amount of money, \$25 to \$50 million dollars. It will anywhere from two to four years before they will be able begin starting the process we are doing on Hwy.199. This fix at the South Y is a long way away and is not incorporated in our plan. The purpose of the South Y is to look at improving traffic in different directions while our project is focusing on safety improvements in the east west direction.

Del Robertson: In last month's minutes there was a question about how much of the \$10 million has already been spent on the study. The response was that there is \$5 million for construction, \$4 million for right-of-way and \$1 million for planning. An example for his question is that on the south side of Redwood Highway between Willow Lane and Hubbard Lane and just east of Sand Creek there is one residence that accesses directly onto Redwood Highway. Sand Creek blocks access along the south side of the highway from the west and there is a five or six lot subdivision with no construction having occurred, just to the east. Could part of the \$4 million deal with an access control issue like that, buying out that existing access and attempting to purchase an alternative access route? Response: Once you look at the alternate solutions, if that particular access is still feasible and they no longer have access to the highway, then it could be a valid right-of-way acquisition.

Robinson also asked about access to Redwood Highway granted within the last year. Why are developments and new accesses along Redwood Highway being allowed when there are so many accidents? Response: The law requires that ODOT allow access to the state highway for properties that do not have an alternative access. If access is denied, ODOT has to purchase the property. Robinson said that was a black and white answer and he asked the CAC to ask for flexibility in answers from the staff and for them to explore the gray areas, not just the black and the white. He thanked staff on the presentations that were given at this meeting.

## **12. CAC Comfort Check**

Vicki Guarino, RVCOG

Guarino said this is the time for each CAC member let the project team know how they are feeling with the way things are going, and to ask questions.

Irv Citron.: A great deal of interest from the people where he lives on the issue of a frontage road, and the lack of discussion on the location.

Ron Wright: Feeling okay and learning a lot that will help us to make some educated guesses in the future.

Rowdy Bates: Okay.

Randy Repp: At the first meeting we discussed budget. I am assuming that some preliminary work has been done on what ODOT feels some of the solutions will be and will we see those before we step into the developing piece? Response: What we will do is sit down as a team and develop some alternatives that we think will work. We have found that this helps the committee to get started. We will also share with the CAC one conceptual alternative that was used to help develop a budget. This alternative is just one option; no decision has been made at this point what the final alternative will be.

Jay Eastwood: Okay,

Jim Rafferty: Dorothy's presentation was very good, but a lot to absorb. KAJO radio had Bill Peterson on to discuss Redwood Avenue starting at Darnell coming toward the fairgrounds. He had stated that we had made a decision to have a turn lane in there. He thought that was part of our project and nothing had been decided yet. Response: Jerry Marmon talked to Bill Peterson, and said he thought it was very important that the CAC know the city's plans so that this committee knows what the city's general intentions are.

Alex Grossi: Eager to get into the thick of this project.

Suzanne Myers: She is interested in the city and county plans for future development and would also like to see a TAZ map.

Bart Van Syoc: Really comfortable at this point in time.

Janine Law: Okay.

Deanie Manning: There is a potential problem of creating more traffic on Redwood Avenue and the CAC needs to look at the impact that we may create there.

### **13. Wrap Up/Adjourn**

Vicki Guarino, RVCOG

Next meeting will be April 14, 2005 at 6 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.