



Highway 62 Corridor Project

Date: May 23, 2007

From: Sue Casavan, RVCOG

Re: **PROJECT DEVELOPMENT TEAM (PDT) / CITIZEN
ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC) JOINT MEETING
MINUTES for May 23, 2007**

CAC Members in Attendance: Mike Gardiner, Bob Plankenhorn, Paige West, Don Riegger, Becky Brooks, Wade Six, Bill Blair, Susan Rachor, David Christian and Richard Moorman

CAC Members Absent: Nanci Watkins, Mike Montero, Mike Malepsy and Curt Burrill

PDT Members in Attendance: Mark Gibson, Dale Lininger, Brian Dunn, Suzanne Myers, Jerry Marmon and Skip Knight

PDT Members Absent: Donna Beck, David Elliott, Mike Quilty, Dan Moore, Nick Fortey and Kelly Madding

Location: Jackson County Public Works Auditorium, White City

Guests: 67 members of the public

Staff Present: Debbie Timms, Jerry Marmon, Chris Zelmer, Susan Landis and Gary Leaming of ODOT; Terry Kearns of URS; Mike Arneson of Harper-Leavitt Engineering; Pat Foley and Sue Casavan of RVCOG

1.0 Welcome and Approval of Minutes

Terry Kearns, URS

Terry convened the meeting of the Highway 62 Corridor Project at 6:07 p.m. He reviewed the meeting's agenda and asked for approval of the November 15, 2006 CAC / PDT joint meeting minutes. The minutes were approved as presented. Skip Knight abstained. Introductions followed where the CAC and PDT identified what they represented.

2.0 Update on Vilas / Justice Road Meeting

Terry Kearns, URS

Terry K. updated the committee members on the May 16th public outreach meetings for Vilas Road, Justice Road and Peace Lane business and property owners. He said the purpose of the meetings were: 1) to provide information regarding the Hwy 62 project and its possible effects on residents and properties and 2) to receive feedback.

Vilas Road Concerns/Questions

- Is an interchange at Vilas needed?
- Drainage issues
- Impacts to developed land
- Notification of property owners
- Composition of the CAC and PDT
- Right of Way impacts
- Schedule
- Zoning / Urban Growth Boundary

Vilas Road Suggestions

- Move interchange
- Move expressway closer to Hwy 62
- Take expressway over Vilas Road

Justice Road / Peace Lane Comments

- Preserve rural environment
- Drainage and flooding
- Right of Way impacts
- Noise
- Access
- Zoning / Urban Growth Boundary

Justice Road / Peace Lane Suggestions

- Use cul-de-sacs on Justice Road
- Take the highway over Justice Road

3.0 Design Refinements

Terry Kearns, URS; Mike Arneson

Collaborative Environmental Transportation Agreement for Streamlining (CETAS)

Vernal Pool Avoidance Alignment

Terry K. said they had gone to the CETAS group for concurrence on the range of alternatives: Bypass with Split Diamond, Bypass w/o Split Diamond, and No-Build. CETAS was given an overview of the project. They said for their purposes it would be required that the team study a vernal pool avoidance alternative, particularly in the area where the alignment joins up with Agate Road. Terry K. showed the avoidance alignment and said the regulatory agencies needed to be fully informed about the pros and cons of each alternative. The team will look at these two options in the EIS and show the natural and environmental impacts so that an informed decision can be made. He emphasized that the avoidance alternative included in the EIS does not mean it will be required to adopt. CETAS was asking for comparisons of the two options. Both designs will be carried into the EIS process.

Skip K. asked if the agencies had priorities about vernal pools or businesses. Terry K. said CETAS did not have enough information to make a fully informed decision. They asked that the avoidance alignment be studied to give the agencies and public the information.

Access Issues

Mike A. reviewed the Bypass with the Split Diamond and the Bypass w/o the Split Diamond alignments through the corridor with the committee. He explained the traffic movements and access issues. Mike A. explained how the Bypass goes over the top of Commerce Drive. Skip K. asked if they were at-grade and suggested keeping Hwy 62 at-grade and have Commerce Drive go under. Mike A. thought it might go out too far and affect airport operations.

Mike A. explained the Vilas Road interchange. He showed the folded diamond interchange and said the quadrants that the ramps were in complemented the traffic movements. The traffic model showed that there would be a heavy demand for east-bound Vilas to make a right turn and go northbound on the Bypass. The team moved forward with a more detailed design and showed committee the access control impacts. He said ODOT standards require ¼ mile spacing to the first signalized intersection from where the ramps intersect Vilas. Within the ¼ mile there is one opportunity to have a right-in and right-out at the 750 ft. mark. He said there were a lot of businesses that would not have access to Vilas that currently do. He showed a detailed map of the access issues.

There was discussion of whether or not to have the Bypass go over the top of Vilas or have Vilas go over the top of the Bypass. Mike A. showed both in great detail. He said typically the major facility is kept level and the minor facility goes over the top. Having the Bypass on top and Vilas underneath would increase the footprint because the ramps

would have to be lengthened. Mike A. said they were looking at the idea of taking the Bypass over the top of Justice Road to reduce impacts. ODOT talked about deviation from their spacing standard to allow less than the 1320 ft. They felt it made sense to consider having the first signalized intersection line up with the existing road. It would still require Peace Lane to come over and be reconnected. More traffic analysis is needed but looks doable. Peace Lane would still be a right-in right-out. There was discussion about having Justice Road cul-de-sac. This would not be necessary if the Bypass goes over the top of Justice Road.

Mike A. said they were looking at the traffic model and the question came up if there was a reason to have an interchange at Vilas. He added that based on the information at the time, the traffic and volumes demanded it. They have been requested to re-evaluate the need.

Skip K. commented that there should be a lot more study in the area of Vilas Road. Terry K. added that they would not have the answer about whether an interchange was needed at Vilas Road for a few weeks.

Wade S. asked where Vilas went up and down relative to the jug handles. Mike A. said it was about 750 feet on each side and was a lot like the Central Point interchange. Wade S. asked to see the power point slide of the frontage road on the north side of the northwest portion of Vilas between Peace and the highway. Mike A. said two properties were landlocked and he showed the access parcel by parcel. Wade S. asked, "If the Bypass was elevated, would it create a smaller footprint in a sensitive area?" Mike A. said that having the Bypass go over Justice had significantly less impact.

Mike A. presented the vernal pool avoidance alignment. He said they tried to keep the interchange the same size, rotating it a little more to the east. Skip K. asked if there were wetlands associated with any of the vernal pools and was mitigation for each different. Terry K. said vernal pools were viewed as a special type of habitat that was different than a wetland. Skip K. asked if wetlands could be used for detention ponds. Terry K. said no because you are putting untreated water into a natural environment.

Bill B. asked where East Gregory would end. Mike A. showed it ending with a cul-de-sac on the map and showed traffic movements out of East Gregory. Mike A. said there would be no access to Crater Lake Hwy from Cory Road to Hwy 140. He showed ideas for frontage roads/connections on the east side.

Mike A. talked about the bridge (Agate Road) and how emergency access to Agate Road would be provided underneath the bridge. He presented the alignment connecting to Dutton Road. He said there was a directional interchange connecting to the highway that would affect access to residential areas around Antelope Creek south of Shasta Avenue. He said Dutton Road was extended to the west to hook into Agate Road because it cannot come out into the highway at the directional interchange. He added that there would be a cul-de-sac at Dutton and explained the access provided. Mike A. presented the Vilas and Justice Road alignments in more detail and opened the meeting up for public comment.

4.0 Public Comment

Terry Kearns, URS

Kevin Miles, Airway Industrial Park: He asked if the change in alignment was realistic on Airway Drive. Terry K. said they thought it was imminent. Terry added that there was a process to go through but we will probably move forward with the re-alignment that lessens the impacts. Kevin M. asked what would be wrong with going 130 feet to the west on the vacant land. Mike A. said that has been drawn up and is an alternative that could still be considered.

Robert McCumber: He wanted to know if the option of widening Airway Drive would be considered when Peace Lane was connected to Airway Drive. Terry K. said it would probably be left as is but the approach to the intersection might be widened. Mike A. added that the minimum necessary to make the intersection function properly would be done.

Clark Stevens, representing several property owners at Justice Road and Gregory: He commented that several commercial businesses were impacted with both alignments and he would like the CAC to consider the impact of having 700 living wage jobs relocate versus saving seven homes. He asked if it was easier to relocate residents or actual businesses. He would like to see the Medco Haul Road used further north. He asked if a bridge over the vernal pools had been investigated. He questioned the livability of being located next to an expressway; noise and visual factors. Terry K. said the Denman Wildlife Refuge was located at the end of the Medco Road. The expressway is designed as a high speed facility that requires certain geometry for turns. Mike A. added that another component was Exclusive Farm Use (EFU) and Open Space Reserve lands. The Medco Haul Road cuts through the middle of these lands. Terry K. explained that the project was at the stage of doing an Environmental Impact Statement and one of the primary reasons for doing the EIS is to articulate to a greater level of detail as to what the impacts are so that in the next phase of decision making the committees and public can make an informed decision about the tradeoffs. Clark Stevens asked why the Medco Haul Road was not being studied as an option. Terry K. said they could not get the correct alignment to Agate Road. Jerry M. added that every alternative that has been studied and dismissed would be clarified in the EIS document. The document has a chapter on what was evaluated and what decisions were behind dismissing alternatives. He said the public will be able to comment on alternatives that were dismissed.

Bob Hunter works for a business that owns 90 acres south of Vilas Road: He said there were 200 plus acres of undeveloped land which would only be served by Airway Drive. The option has closed off Industry Way and the only other access was North Runway Drive. He added that earlier the team had talked about Commerce Way extending over to serve the customs building at the airport. He suggested extending Coker Butte Road over the top of the Bypass. This would open up access to 200 acres. He thinks this would be important to the city's industrial development. Mike A. responded that Coker Butte

could easily be extended and put over the Bypass but it would not be part of this project, it would be a city project.

Rod Witham, owner of Witham's Truck Center: He thought that an elevated facility (southern terminus) would be unsafe, hazardous, and emergency access would be limited. The public needs to know the risks. Terry K. said there is a Bypass option being studied without the split diamond. Rod W. feels that that option was not fully explained at the last meeting. Terry K. said that meetings were held with the public in that part of the corridor some time ago. Most people present at this meeting are concerned about Vilas / Justice Road issues. Rod W. said he was not notified of the meeting. He wants to have his input heard because his business and family are highly affected. He commented that he is interested in future improvements. He added, that although ODOT made it almost impossible to access his business (North Medford Interchange project), from a safety standpoint it has improved and he had to admit, that after it was done, people can read the signs and can find their way in. He commented that he had issues with people using the nearby lots; trucks feel like they are driving into a car lot and not a business.

Ron Brian, Peace Lane property owner: He said the alignment runs through his property. He wonders what the real number is of affected businesses and residences. Terry K. said this information would come out in the Draft Environmental Analysis (DEA). The intent of the document is to disclose the facts.

Joan Velasquez, Peace Lane property owner: She asked if the land use would change when the expressway is built. She is concerned about what will happen to their homes and property. Terry K. responded that this project would not change the zoning. Zoning is a county or city issue. Joan V. added that she was told there would be no changes in this area. She has seen many changes and would like to find out what will happen.

Terry K. explained that there will be several points in this project where she will be able to comment. A response to all comments is required.

Norma Ingretson, Peace Lane property owner: She described the location of her property and said the alignment would take out her house, her daughter's house, and her neighbor's. Wade S. asked if the team had looked at making the connection at the east end of Peace Lane where there are no structures to minimize some of the impacts. Man from audience commented that Peace Lane residents were used to making right and left turns and feel they do not need sweeping corners for connectivity. Mike A. responded that the access road could be drawn up to follow property lines.

Woman from audience: She asked if there had been discussion on having an interchange at East Gregory Road and Hwy 140 and leaving Vilas alone. Terry K. responded that an alternative was considered that took Hwy 62 through White City but the interchange would have taken out the entire area. Jerry M. added that the alternative would be in the EIS document with discussion of why it was dismissed

Man from audience: He said he understood that the UGB was being reconsidered in the next 5-10 years and this project was set for that time. He wondered if an alternative could be drawn up to show those changes. Terry K. said that would be based on speculation. The team is required to look at where the current UGB is. He added that the project would be built in phases and as each phase approached the conditions could be re-evaluated.

Man from audience: He commented that if there was consideration for other interests why there could not be consideration for a parallel road to Vilas that would run behind all the affected properties and out of the developed area.

Man from audience: He asked why land was zoned EFU when it was not farmed or irrigated and why vernal pools were more important than people's jobs. Terry K. explained that the classification of EFU was a county or city issue and ODOT had no control over that. As far as vernal pools being more important than economic loss, that has not been determined. He said the teams will quantify these issues.

Man from audience: He commented that Medco Haul Road already had dedicated ROW. Why not follow the Haul Road as far as possible without dropping up and down. Terry K. said the team would look at both alignments and look at ways to mitigate impacts.

Karen Adams, Peace Lane property owner: She asked how wide Peace Lane currently is. Mike A. said the ROW is 60 feet wide but the pavement is not. He asked where her property was and explained the impacts. Terry K. added that if ODOT could not provide access to a property (landlocked) they will compensate for it.

Man from audience: He asked if bypass going over Justice would be a landfill bypass or an elevated bypass. Terry K. said it would be a bridge structure at Justice.

Woman from audience: She asked, in reference to industrial property across the street on Vilas, if there could be a road that surrounds the area connecting to Vilas that exits to the south where you could turn either way. Terry K. said the intent is to tie the properties into the directional access.

Woman from audience: She asked if the intersection at Vilas and Hwy 62 would be improved with the development of Vilas with the bypass. Terry K. said that would become a city project. The existing Hwy 62 would be turned over to the city and the county as part of a jurisdictional exchange.

5.0 CAC / PDT Comfort Check

Terry Kearns, URS

Suzanne Myers: Fine.

Mike Gardiner: Okay.

Paige West: Okay.

Richard Moorman: Is it understood that the CAC members and the Project Development Team (PDT) will have another meeting to discuss these potential changes. Terry K. said if the analysis comes back that Vilas Road may or may not need an interchange, I would say yes, we would need to have another meeting. He added that the previous analysis showed that an interchange was needed and they will go back and analyze it. He said the decision then becomes less of a technical decision and more of a development type decision. He asked the committees if they thought they should come back together and discuss the analysis. Committee members unanimously agreed to a future meeting.

Dale Lininger: Feeling good. I appreciate the comments from the public tonight.

Bob Plankenhorn: Good.

Mark Gibson: Good.

Wade Six: Good.

Susan Rachor: Good.

Don Riegger: Good.

Bill Blair: Good.

Skip Knight: I'm comfortable.

Becky Brooks: Good.

Brian Dunn: Good.

Jerry Marmon: Good.

David Christian: I'm good.

6.0 Revised Schedule / Next Steps

Terry Kearns, URS

Terry K. suggested, based on the information received tonight, moving forward with taking Justice Road underneath the bypass and making the changes that are possible on Vilas Road. Proceed with these changes in the document and incorporate them into the design. He added we will not have an answer for a couple weeks regarding the question about whether an interchange is needed at Vilas Road.

He said the technical reports were supposed to be done July 1st and he would like to move it out a month so he could send the crews out to look at some of the changes that have been suggested. The revised schedule is:

Fall 2007: Publish Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). Solicit comments from public and affected agencies.

Spring 2008: Select preferred alternative, based on analysis results and comments received. Public comment period, come back to the CAC and the PDT and ask for a decision about which alternative to move forward.

Jan. 2009: Publish Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS). Document the project and mitigation for impacts.

7.0 Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.