

April 2000

From: John Morrison, RVCOG

Date: April 14, 2000

Attendees: Solution Team members present: Mark McQueen; Brian Dunn; Joe Strahl; Julie Brown; Skip Knight; Jim Oldland; Lisa Owens; Mark Gallagher; Greg Holthoff; Jeff Graham; Mike Burrill; Dan Moore; Mark Ashby. Solution Team Members absent: Reeve Hennion; Robin Marshall.

Re: SOLUTION TEAM MEETING DRAFT MINUTES for April 5, 2000

Location: ODOT/Jackson County Annex Conference Room, 200 Antelope Road, White City

Guests: Bon Dysart; Laurie Dysart; Bob Dysart; Eric Jacobsen (DLCD); Jeff Griffin (DLCD); Eric Stark; Mayor Lindsay Berryman

Project Team Present: David Mayfield, URS; Mike Gallagher, URS; Frank Stevens, ODOT; Gary Shaff, JRH; John Morrison, RVCOG.

1.0 Call to Order/Approval of Minutes

Frank Stevens called the meeting to order at 9:04 AM. He welcomed the public, reviewed the agenda and asked for approval of minutes of the previous meeting. Minutes were approved unanimously without change.

2.0 Citizen Input

Frank Stevens asked if there was any citizen comment. There was none.

3.0 Citizen Advisory Committee Report

CAC facilitator John Morrison reported that the CAC had reviewed access management and land use issues at its March 15 meeting. He referred the Solution Team to the CAC minutes in their packet for specific CAC member comments on the two issues. Morrison reported that enthusiasm and interest in the project remains high among the CAC members. They discussed whether monthly meetings were needed as the project moves into the EIS phase, and had agreed that they should continue to meet on their monthly schedule. Morrison also noted that bike/pedestrian issues were of particular interest to the CAC and they would be reviewing bike/ped designs in upcoming meetings. Morrison noted that public attendance at the CAC meetings had dropped from the 100+ that had been attending to about 40 since the alternatives had been narrowed to the three remaining.

4.0 Purpose of Meeting

Dave Mayfield presented a brief overview of the project status to date. He said the focus of the project thus far had been on solving the congestion at the interchange. When modeling was done, it had assumed that access control and bus use would take place, but the details had not been talked about. Today, he said, the discussion would begin to focus on multimodal and land use issues. Mayfield said that he was going to shift the agenda by moving up the item on land use opportunities and would discuss the design update later in the meeting. He then introduced Eric Jacobsen (DLCD) and Gary Shaff (JRH) to set the stage for the discussion of land use options as they related to the project and the three remaining alternatives under analysis.

5.0 Land Use Issues

Gary Shaff opened the presentation by saying that the project is now at a point where we can document some of the land use implications of the proposed alternatives. He said impacts fall into three categories: direct, indirect and cumulative. These are anticipated as well as currently known. He then showed a map of City of Medford zoning based on the city Comprehensive Plan. He noted that alternatives #2 and #11 (which are proposed to be located outside the current interchange area) would encounter land uses not associated with the interchange, specifically some residential zoning. He said the project team needs to explore the likely disposition of those lands. He then showed the vacant lands in the area which would be most likely to change use. He noted that the EIS process must show compliance with many documents, including the Regional Transportation Plan, the state Transportation Planning Rule and others, to include an access management plan. He said that Smart Development concepts would be considered as part of the process. They are: energy efficiency; maximizing urban services, human scale development, transit and integrating open spaces.

Solution Team member Mark Gallagher then gave a historical overview of the area around the alternative #2/#11 area. He said the area around Charlotte Anne drive was included in the UGB in 1990 for residential development, but has lain fallow. It is set for additional review, particularly for its Greenway impacts. He noted that the real world impacts of roads in residential areas need consideration. He said he agreed with revisiting the location of the TOD site in the area, particularly because alternatives #2 and #11 will have a major impact on Center Street. He noted that a TOD site had been considered in the area of the former Kmart, with another proposed for S. Stage. He said these might be combined in a new location. At this time, the S. Stage TOD is still being reviewed; the Kmart TOD is not moving forward.

Jeff Griffin asked about the land use assumptions in the model, saying if the project is looking at significant land use changes, they will need to be modeled. Land use is a subset of data within the model. Mike Burrill said we need to clarify which designated commercial areas are not expected to be developed as commercial. Mark Gallagher said as an example of this is a portion of the old Starlite Theater site which is zoned commercial, but has a lot of Greenway land. Burrill said he was talking about the reality of the land. We should not be talking about dropping or changing commercial land. He said a lot of the land is already in public ownership.

Gary Shaff said the team must consider development and employment potential of land use to understand transportation implications. He said the changes west of the freeway (i.e. from residential to something else) are not expected on the east (manor) side. He said with all the alternatives, if we fix the transportation problem, we must accommodate land use and zoning changes, and added that land use assumptions would reflect existing comp plan designations.

Dave Mayfield said the Solution Team must consider the land use impacts. We must determine if qualitative or quantitative assessments are necessary to answer the questions. Brian Dunn said we must consider what the land use impacts will be on the downtown Medford Commercial development. There was discussion of how realistic projections of land use might be. Mike Burrill stressed that it is important that the Team protect future commercial development in the South Gateway with what it is doing here. He said the Team must be careful. It is dealing with 20-year projections, which, once they become part of the record, can have an impact. He suggested the Team might want to look at the 10-year absorption rate as opposed to 20 years.

Eric Jacobsen then presented the DLCD perspective of land use issues connected to smart development. He said DLCD is interested in three primary elements. 1) What is happening downtown, and can the South Medford Interchange project support this; 2) avoiding unintended consequences; 3) intensity of land use within existing zoning. All three can threaten the state's investment in the infrastructure. He also touched on the Oregon Highway Plan, which has an Interchange Refinement Plan that is concerned with the relationship to the surrounding street network; access issues and capacity. He said in reviewing the project, DLCD needs to look at the range of permitted uses and what are likely changes. In regard to the TOD, he said there doesn't need to be a TOD as defined, but the project does need transit. The process will be to review the development and street network and transit service for connectivity.

Mark Ashby asked how does land use intensification potentially impact development and traffic generation? Jacobsen said development that offers people transportation options holds the best potential for protecting the investment. This allows people to make adaptive choices that "expand" capacity.

6.0 Design Update

Dave Mayfield then walked the Team through the latest design iterations on the three alternatives. He said alternative #14 might be less conducive to a TOD near the former Kmart site. Alternatives #2 & #11 would work since Barnett provides good access and E-W connectivity. Mark Gallagher added that the Team must consider the choice between development at the existing interchange with access control vs. developing a new freeway interchange farther away. Jeff Graham said the question is how to design the interchange so people can reasonably walk. Eric Jacobsen noted that access management is a component of smart development with local street connectivity figured in. Lisa Owens said #2/#11 offer better chance of access management because the area is mostly undeveloped. Frank Stevens noted that ODOT will bring in analysis teams to review access issues.

Jeff Graham asked how an interchange refinement plan will protect the investment. Dave said the community will develop its own vision of what this area should be. ODOT can then work with the city and community on access issues. Gary Shaff noted that this project would not develop the refinement plan. An EIS might contain a recommendation or provide input, but the refinement plan would come later.

Dan Moore asked if this group should be looking into land use changes (something like an interchange management concept) as part of its deliberations. Shaff said he sees a parallel process; the EIS process on one hand; the community process on the other.

Brian Dunn then asked who has authority for land use decisions vs. other types of decisions.

Joe Strahl said he felt developing a management plan is outside the Solution Team's authority. Dan Moore then asked ' "If we don't, who does? It is in the highway plan." Dave Mayfield said the land use issues are bigger than the interchange issues. Lindsay Berryman suggested the group is not looking far enough. It is a regional problem.

Frank Stevens said the question is, who has the authority: ODOT authority goes as far as access management. Local jurisdictions have authority over land use. He said the process has to be a partnership. Eric Jacobsen said the project needs a package of record in which ODOT would do certain stipulated things, RVCOG do others and the city other things yet. Dan Moore expressed concern over Highway 99. He asked how are we going to ensure LOS on Stewart, Garfield, etc. won't soon be right back in the same situation we are in now? Joe

Strahl said the discussion points out that there is a misunderstanding the project mission statement. It does not support these kinds of recommendations. We might have to change our mission statement. Mark Ashby said he thinks investment and livability recommendations are consistent with the project Mission Statement.

Brian Dunn said the EIS process is more extensive than people think. The Team needs to know who makes the decisions what info do they need to do that. We need to look at a range of recommendations. Dave Mayfield asked what info does the Consultant team need to present to the Solution Team to help it make decisions in the subject area? Given the importance, how does the group wish to proceed? Comment: the community is driving the process. Mike Burrill said the Team needs to look at portions of land within parcels that are developable and portions that are not.

After a break, Dave Mayfield asked the group if they could agree on the points brought up during the discussion that ODOT was the decision maker on transportation issues and the jurisdictions the decision maker of land use issues? And that each can make *recommendations* within the others' area.

Greg Holthoff said the NEPA process requires these kinds of recommendations. Frank Stevens added that he has a concern that certain specific land use recommendations might be inappropriate. Dan Moore asked, wouldn't the Team want to look at impacts to residential properties and make recommendations. Dave Mayfield replied that the Team is to make "determinations of consistency" with comprehensive plan designations. Gary Shaff said the Team's role is to analyze impacts and document facts. Frank Stevens added that the Team needs to hear from the City of Medford as to what info it needs to make decisions. Dave Mayfield said there was no immediate need to action of the subject. The Team has time to get more specific information given the city's needs.

7.0 Value Engineering Team Report

Frank Stevens gave a top line report on the findings of the ODOT Value Engineering (VE) Team. The VE team is comprised of experienced ODOT personnel who review the alternatives for such issues as ROW, bridge design, preliminary design, environmental. The VE process offers an independent assessment of the project designs provided by experts that have had little or no previous experience with the project. The purpose is to provide fresh ideas and cost savings for the alternatives. Stevens said the full range of findings would be available next meeting. Meanwhile preliminary results showed that #2 has some operations issues and will be expensive to build. Moving the bridge over the freeway on #2 and #11 is being considered, and #14 has problems because the ramps probably won't work with a 6-lane freeway, which may be needed in the future. At this point, he said #11 appears to have fewer impacts, would be cheaper to build and poses fewer operation problems.

8.0 Next Meeting

The Team then discussed if there was sufficient reason to meet next month. It was decided there was sufficient work to be done to make a meeting worthwhile. Upcoming schedule: completing methodologies, determine footprint (esp. #11), then several months of study and a draft EIS in November.

9.0 Meeting Critique

There was still some confusion on the transportation vs. land use decision making which needed to be worked out. Mayfield said the DEIS is the stage in which in-depth studies identify land use effects associated with each alternative, recommend mitigation for adverse impacts, and report on how the project may be consistent/compatible with existing land

use, zoning, and comprehensive plans. Mayfield said he was comfortable with the Solution Team making recommendations that they wanted regarding land use, but that the City would generate the actual decision on the land use. Mayfield said that a land use change could be required for an alternative to move forward, but this would likely happen only if a land use impact associated with an alternative was so severe that it caused a significant problem – like compromising that alternative's ability to provide a long-term solution the transportation problem. The City was encouraged to embark on a parallel process of reassessing the land uses near the proposed transportation changes.

Frank Stevens then asked each member of the Solution if they were comfortable with the meeting and the progress made. All expressed comfort with the process and felt the land use/transportation decision-making discussion had been very good.

10.0 Adjourn

Next meeting Wednesday May 3, 2000