

December 1999

From: John Morrison

Date: December 7, 1999

Attendees: Solution Team members present: Dan Moore, Julie Brown, Frank Stevens, Mike Burrill, Robin Marshall, Mark McQueen, Brian Dunn, Joe Strahl, Reeve Hennion, Lisa Owens, Lindsay Berryman (for Skip Knight), Mark Gallagher.
Members absent: Skip Knight, Mark Ashby, Greg Holthoff, Jim Oldland.

Re: SOLUTION TEAM MEETING MINUTES FOR DECEMBER 1, 1999

Location: ODOT Conference Room B&C, 200 Antelope Rd., White City.

Guests: Bon Dysart, Laurie Dysart, Bob Dysart, Kristy Miles Dysart, David Bolen, Hallie Goings, Pat Oldenburg, Tom Oldenburg, Bob Wickman, Steve Ostrander, Susan W. Six.

Consultant Team Present:

David Mayfield, URS; Jim Hanks, JRH; John Morrison, RVCOG.

1.0 Call to Order

Frank Stevens called the meeting to order at 9:10 AM. Minutes of the November 3, 1999, Solution Team meeting were approved without comment

2.0 Public Comment

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

3.0 Feedback from Citizen Advisory Committee

John Morrison directed Solution Team members to the draft minutes from the November 17 CAC meeting included in the Solution Team packet. He said much of the meeting was devoted to going over the evaluation criteria. He indicated that although the material was difficult for some CAC members to absorb in so short a period of time, in general, the CAC felt comfortable with the criteria as developed. At this point, the CAC feels any further reworking (if indeed any is needed) of the criteria should wait until modeling has been completed. At that time, the evaluation criteria would begin to come into play, and any possible shortcomings would be revealed. To that effect, the CAC is eager to get on with the modeling. Morrison also reported that the effort to reach more members of the public in neighborhoods that have not been heard from much was producing results. A number of residents of the Portland Ave. and Garfield areas attended the last CAC meeting and gave input. Most were concerned with the impact of additional traffic in their neighborhoods. Morrison pointed out the packet of citizen comments he had distributed prior to the meeting. This included all comments received since the last Solution Team meeting. He also directed the Solution Team's attention to a book presented for the record by Bon Dysart of the Committee to Preserve Established Neighborhoods (CPEN) which contain 880 signatures of citizens concerned over any solution which might include additional traffic in the Ellendale/Groveland area. Also presented was a draft alternative mission statement and supporting rationale submitted by David Bolen, a resident of the Groveland/Ellendale area. Morrison said the CAC had not yet had the opportunity to review Mr. Bolen's suggestions, but that he felt they should be forwarded to the Solution Team rather than sitting a month waiting for review by the CAC.

4.0 Preliminary Modeling

Jim Hanks gave the Solution Team a presentation on the first iteration of the modeling runs for the So. Medford Interchange Project. He said runs had been completed in four areas: a) TSM/TDM/TOD, b) Interchange improvements, c) local street improvements and d) South Stage Road. Hanks said that as part of the modeling, the analysis included all Tier One projects (those projects that might reasonably be expected to be built in the next 20 years). Hanks said the Interchange improvements were modeled first. He briefly outlined each interchange option to bring the Solution Team up to speed, explaining that each was individually modeled. He said preliminary results indicate that some of the interchange concepts do hold potential for relieving congestion at the interchange. Hanks then discussed the aggregated local street improvement. Hanks said model runs were being conducted on an aggregate of local street options in one modeling run. The model run included Ellendale/Groveland/Sunrise, extension of Biddle Road, the Columbus extension, Garfield to Ellendale, Center Drive, Juanipero (which would add links to create a route south of Barnett), Stewart to Barnett, and the Spencer to Alba connection. Further analysis will have to be done before we know the impact of all the individual components within the several street improvement alternatives. Hanks said all the street connection alternatives were modeled with two lanes except for the Biddle Road extension and a short piece of Center Drive at four lanes.

Hanks said the data thus far show the following conclusions:

1. We can't just do a no-build with TSM, TDM & TOD. Congestion at the interchange can be reduced, but it will take more.
2. Interchange improvements can solve the problems, but at this point we don't know what secondary problems might ensue. (For example, Interchange "C" works, but drivers can't get to it).
3. Preliminary analysis indicates that if all the local street projects listed among the alternative proposals are included, they will work. However, it is expected that some don't help the interchange congestion, some do. We will have to do further analysis here. We don't have a breakdown yet.
4. Analysis indicates the South Stage Road options doesn't improve traffic congestion in the problem area. This includes analysis of both the interchange and the overpass options. Hanks recommended that based on the info thus far, no further South Stage Road alternatives should be included in this project, although it may well still be a good idea for other transportation problems outside of this project.

The Solution Team then discussed dropping the South Stage Road Alternative. Joe Strahl asked if TDM/TSM analysis would continue as part of further study. Hanks replied yes, it is a requirement. Hanks said this was a fairly easy decision. The hard ones would be on which alternatives to carry forward, but to do that the Team needs sufficient detail on the neighborhood alternatives to determine individual impacts. Mike Burrill said the South Stage/North Phoenix road connection deserved further study on other projects. Guest David Bolen said the South Stage Road option is important for overall regional transportation planning being done by RVCOG, and wondered why belt line portions were not being included in this project.

Dan Moore of RVCOG then gave a presentation on level of service (LOS) analysis modeling runs being done for the MPO area. He said the model showed that most LOS problems are in the East Medford area and the traffic projections for the N. Phoenix Road to Foothill Road area is not good, showing level of service "F" over the 20 year planning period. He then showed a map of a model run on a hypothetical new belt line connector running east of, and parallel to Foothill Road from Barnett through to Highway 140. He said the potential benefits of such a route would be to the north (including Highway 62), but that the belt line that was

modeled provided almost no advantage for Barnett Road or North Phoenix. Reeve Hennion said the focus should be on the South Medford Interchange area, and that it appears that the South Stage Road options would not yield much for this project. Frank Stevens then asked if there was consensus among the group to support no further consideration of the South Stage options. Lisa Owens said she was a little uncomfortable with dropping the option if a belt line concept could help. The group consensus was to drop the South Stage Road options now, with the stipulation that it could be brought back in at some point if further analysis showed there might be merit in doing so.

5.0 Addressing Project Hurdles (cont'd from 11/3/99)

Frank Stevens revisited the "Double Reversal" exercise from the previous meeting. He opened by reviewing the ways the group felt the process might "be derailed" which were identified at the previous meeting. He then turned to a discussion of ways the Solution Team is addressing or avoiding the possible derailment issues. Since the first three concerns on the list had been addressed last month, he started with #4

Possible problem – Solution:

- #4: Wrong assumptions used – Consultant team to report assumptions to CAC and Solution Team for review/comment. Solution Team is challenging assumptions as it goes to make sure this doesn't happen. Part of CAC and Solution Team job is to challenge assumptions.
- #5: Political pressure, special interests – The Team has to review all options; can't drop any without substantial justification (data); open process maintained to ensure no surprises.
- #6: Not maintaining schedule – Oversight keeps project on schedule; consultant to report progress to Solution Team.
- #7: Inconsistency with MPO adopted RTP process – Continue to use MPO/RTP goals, policies and assumptions
- #8: Inconsistency with Medford TSP – (Same as above)
- #9: Public's lack of project knowledge – Continue to use CAC as sounding board
- #10: Lack of political will – Continue contact with City Council, legislature, influential groups, TRADCO; continue to listen to community; maintain feedback loop.
- #11: No alternatives work – This has been solved by modeling run info.
- #12: Solution relies on capacity improvements that exceed Air Quality standards – AQ standards must be met.
- #13: VMT's not reduced – Support alternative modes of transportation, land use and other VMT reduction measures.
- #14: Come up with an automobile-only solution – Abide by multi-modal solutions including freight.
- #15: No understanding of project need – (part of #9 above)
- #16: Missing an important alternative – Continued openness to new proposals, coordination with other projects, focus on new ideas.
- #17: Failure to consider transit – See #13, #14 above.
- #18: Discouraging transit? – See #14. Covered with multi-modal focus, but include freight mobility.
- #19: Solution not acceptable from an environmental regulatory standpoint – On Dave Mayfield's suggestion, Team agreed to table this measure pending a more detailed presentation on the subject. Will take this up next meeting.
- #20: Future consideration not far enough out – This is covered in the evaluation criteria. Working with a 2030 horizon.

6.0 Revising Alternative Concepts

Dave Mayfield suggested discussing this item at the next meeting after the modeling data had been better developed. The Team agreed.

7.0 Meeting Critique

Frank Stevens then asked the Team members how comfortable they were with the meeting. Among the comments were:

"Feeling good, but appetite is whetted for more modeling data."

"Want more modeling. It is good to hear that we have a fix."

"Good that multi-modal is being considered."

"Need more time for a good discussion of issues with those attending the meeting."

"Like the process of citizen involvement."

"Would like a brief summary to open each meeting which would state where we are in the process, and where we are going in the meeting. It would help me understand the whole picture."

8.0 Meeting Adjourned

Next meeting will be held from 9:00 to 11:30 AM on January 5, 2000, at the ODOT Conference Room, 200 Antelope Road, White City.