

July 1999

From: John Morrison

Date: July 9, 1999

Attendees: Solutions Team members present: Frank Stevens, Mark McQueen, Brian Dunn, Greg Holthoff, Laurel Prairie-Kuntz, Mike Burrill, Dan Moore, Robin Marshall, Lisa Owen, Skip Knight, Mark Gallagher, , Julie Brown. Solutions Team members absent: Joe Strahl, Jim Oldland, Reeve Hennion.

Re: Minutes of the July 7, 1999, meeting of the South Medford Interchange Solutions Team.

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

Guests: Jeff Griffin, DLCD; Bill Moore, Medford City Council; Jim Davis, Medford Mail-Tribune, Scott Chancey, RVTD

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. He introduced guest Jim Davis, a reporter for the Medford Mail-Tribune, to the Solution Team.

2.0 Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting

Minutes of the June 2, 1999, Team meeting were unanimously approved without change.

3.0 Public Comment

There was no public comment offered.

4.0 Announcements

Frank Stevens reminded the Team that the Oregon Transportation Commission will be meeting in the Jackson/Josephine County region on August 12 and 13. He said that during their visit, the members of the Commission would be hearing presentations on a number of projects in the area, including South Medford Interchange, Highway 62, Highway 238, Fern Valley Road Interchange, and the 6th & 7th Street project in Grants Pass. Stevens said that as a way of demonstrating local involvement in these projects, a local representative would make each presentation. Mike Montero will present the Highway 62 project; Joe Strahl will present the Highway 238 project; Larry Parducci will present Fern Valley. Stevens asked the group if Mike Burrill would be acceptable as presenter for the South Medford Interchange project. The Team unanimously supported the selection of Mike Burrill to be presenter. Frank Stevens then brought up the subject of the timing to the monthly Solution Team meeting. He said that having the Highway 62 and South Medford Solution Team meetings on the same day is a hardship on a number of people who have to attend both. He said the length of the two meetings and the highly detailed information that is gone over has people extremely tired at the end of the day, which does not lend itself to people doing their best work. He suggested that we hold the two meetings on consecutive days, the first in the afternoon and the second the following morning. The Solution Team agreed that holding both meetings the same day was not an ideal situation, After considerable discussion it was decided that the best days would be to hold the meetings Tuesday afternoon followed by Wednesday morning. It was decided to move the Highway 62 Solution Team meeting to Tuesday afternoons, and leave the South Medford Interchange Solution Team meetings on

Wednesday mornings. This appeared to best meet the schedule of those present. Frank Stevens said he would contact the other members of the Highway 62 Solutions Team to get their approval for the change.

5.0 ADOPTION OF ALTERNATIVES CONCEPTS

Dave Mayfield presented new maps in color of the six alternative concepts that were developed by the Solutions team at the June meeting. In addition, he introduced two additional alternative concepts for the Team's review.

- a. Alternative 14 – a once way couplet concept for the Barnett Road/South Interchange area.
- b. A Spencer Street extension.

The Spencer Street extension is a concept that would extend Spencer Street south to Alba. Several members of the Team noted some potential problems with this idea, including how it might impact the parkland in the area, how it would connect with Alba, and Alba's position right across from the freeway off ramp. The Team felt it would have to be modeled to determine its impact. Jim Hanks suggested it should be considered as a feature that could be fit into a scenario once modeled. The Team supported this approach.

Jim Hanks reviewed Alternative 14 for the group. The Concept was added to provide a one-way couplet option which several Solution Team members had expressed interest in. The concept would provide east-west connectivity with a one way couplet and a split interchange that moves westbound Barnett slightly north where eastbound traffic will utilize the present right of way. Hanks said the concept has fewer environmental issues. It avoids parkland, and uses part of the old Kmart parking lot. Some problems pointed out were the difficulty for westbound Barnett traffic to get on the freeway travelling south. Also, the design does not deal well with E-W connectivity to Stewart which is an important E-W connection. The Team decided that Alternative should be added to the list of concepts because it might serve well in the process of mixing and matching that will occur as the modeling is conducted.

The discussion then turned to the concept of "mix and match" as it related to modeling the concepts outlined so far. Mark Gallagher asked if the group should be concerned that no single alternative concept at this point seemed to contain most or all of the features the group likes the most. Dave Mayfield and Jim Hanks said if the group felt it would be a good idea to develop a map with most of what people liked, now was the time to do it. Skip Knight said the concepts need modeling before anything is thrown out. Following discussion, it was decided that the alternatives would be forwarded for modeling as they are. The Team felt that any attempts to come up with a single map that contained all the "most liked" concepts could only be done through the process of eliminating some of the concepts and that none should be eliminated until the modeling was done.

Guest Bill Moore then asked if the Team was going to put the political ramifications of the concepts in the deliberations. He said the Medford Transportation Committee has \$21 million committed to projects that it must protect. The Committee has pledged not to tamper with the priorities, Moore said, and now as the Solution Team moves forward, it needs to incorporate the projects on the books as they work to ameliorate the problems. Member Burrill echoed this theme, saying the Team needs to coordinate with the Medford Committee. Gallagher stated that the Solutions Team is at a purely planning phase, and is now determining how much value a proposal has. Once this is completed, it will be weighed against the political reality, and compared to what's already in place. In order to facilitate the coordination of the Solutions Team's work with the Medford Transportation Committee, the Team unanimously approved extending an open invitation to Bill Moore and the members of the MTC to attend the meetings at any time. Jim Hanks said there was value in

Bill Moore and Skip Knight could let the Team know what is politically impossible. Frank Stevens cautioned that the Team needs to be aware of the political climate, but that nevertheless, we need to move ahead. As the community learns more about potential benefits of the solutions proposed, the political realities may change. Bill Moore said there will always be some resistance to nearly any project and the best way to deal with it is by educating the public and the community.

Frank Stevens then asked the group if they were comfortable with the process of developing the alternatives thus far. The consensus was that the group was as comfortable as they can be until they get the results of the modeling, and that all seven alternatives and the Spencer Street extension should be forwarded for modeling. Greg Holthoff said it was important to document each step of elimination or acceptance of the alternatives as they move ahead in the process. Mark McQueen questioned if, when the Team begins to apply evaluation criteria, it will be able to go back and retest with the model. Mayfield said the consultant team would bring back any alternatives for testing that appear to physically work with the others. The Team voted unanimously to carry forward all seven alternatives concepts, and include the Spencer Street extension.

6.0 EVALUATION CRITERIA

Dave Mayfield led the group through a process to refine the evaluation criteria. He told the group that while the modeling will help identify the pros and cons and impacts of various options, it will not do everything. Once the modeling is completed we will probably be down to about five or six options. At that point, it is time to apply evaluation criteria which is how the Team will decide which alternatives best achieve the project overall goals.

The Team then walked through the first four goals and made a number of suggestions as to where the language should be revised. Dave Mayfield will bring revised evaluation criteria for Goals One through 4 to the next meeting. The Solution Team will go through remainder of the criteria at that time.

7.0 MEETING ADJOURNED

Next meeting will be held on August 4, 1999, from 9:00 AM to 11:30 AM at the ODOT Conference Room, 200 Antelope road, White City.