

Oregon Traffic Control Devices Committee

Meeting Minutes

November 17, 2000

Marion County Public Works, Salem, Oregon

Members Present: Rob Burchfield, City of Portland; Ed Fischer, Secretary, ODOT State Traffic Engineer; Gary Judd, Chair, Deschutes County; Joseph Marek, Clackamas County; Randall Wooley, City of Beaverton; Mike Wilson, City of Bend; Stephen Wilson, ODOT Region 4; Charles Radosta, ITE/Kittelson & Associates; Cynthia Schmitt, Marion County

Members Absent: Lt. Gordon Renskers, OSP

Others Present: Tori Kinne, FHWA, Orville Gaylor, Rick Wood, Doug Bish, Kevin Haas and Paul Davis, ODOT Traffic Management Section; Ed Chastain, Lane County; John Emmons, City of Eugene

Approval of September 2000 Meeting Minutes

After introductions, the Committee voted approval of the September 15, 2000 meeting minutes with one change: Cynthia Schmitt's action item was actually just an offer and didn't rise to the "Action" level.

Old Business

Policy Statement on Cooperative Traffic Control Update

Ed Fischer handed out the latest draft and summarized activity of the last Subcommittee meeting. Progress thus far has been limited. Adopting ODOT's maintenance standards has been delayed since it happens that ODOT is in the midst of revising those standards. Ed went over other draft changes to the Policy Statement. The next subcommittee meeting should be Thursday December 7th.

Electrical Inspections/Permits for Traffic Signals Update

Ed Fischer briefed on progress. For many years, ODOT has not been in compliance with statutes requiring certified electrical inspectors doing signal inspections and were not operating under a valid exemption according to the Attorney General. He had his latest meeting with Gary Wilson, Chief Electrical Inspector for the state last week. ODOT will probably try to get a kind of long term permit from the Oregon Electrical Board where we can do our own inspections. We would need an intergovernmental agreement (IGA) to the effect that we'll do the inspections with certified electrical inspectors. This would require ODOT to shoulder costs and responsibilities to get such people trained/available, likely including a pay differential. Annual records would be audited by the Electrical Board.

Other issues include the difference between ODOT specifications and plans for signals and the national electric code which doesn't allow power to green wires or low and high voltage wires going up the same poles, etc. Therefore another task ODOT is doing is working to identify the differences between what ODOT standard specifications and plans call for and what the NEC calls for. This should be of some value to most other jurisdictions. Hopefully Gary Wilson will write a letter of exemption to cover signals on these differences. Contact for local jurisdictions interested in discussing this would be any member of the subcommittee.

Multilane Roundabout Striping Plan

To stripe or not to stripe multilane roundabouts, that is the question. Ed Fischer said the question occurred because the FHWA Guideline publication put together by Kittleson & Associates recommended not striping, while the MUTCD draft shows striping.

Ed Fischer said that in planning for an upcoming multilane roundabout project in Astoria, an internal ODOT committee met to discuss striping. They also saw it as an opportunity to begin forming general guidance on signing and striping roundabouts. This group agreed that minimal striping was desirable. The first thing they decided to delete was sharks-teeth yield lines. Yield signs placed near the dashed edgelines for the circulatory roadway should be sufficient.

The ODOT group agreed to generally follow the MUTCD striping. They agreed to use the "zebra" (continental, longitudinal) crosswalk markings, and not to use the optional parallel line crosswalks. They decided to use patches within the circular roadway instead of dashed lines to guide vehicles to the exits. The patches (dots, pavement markers) would be reflectorized directionally so that the drivers within the circular roadway would see them better than those waiting to enter. Ed Fischer said they were particularly interested in committee input into this discussion.

The ODOT committee also agreed to remove the inner circular yellow striping around the truck apron.

Lane control signs were looked at, including variations showing sweeping curving lane control signs, but there was concern traffic could turn left just inside the splitter island. At a later meeting, the idea of a variation of the sign in traffic calming circles was suggested and now appears to be a promising concept. Ed Fischer thinks it may become standard ODOT policy to provide the lane control signs in advance of modern roundabouts. Details remain to be worked out.

Cynthia Schmitt asked whether ODOT was envisioning these ideas as being mandatory or suggested. She said Marion County prefers to reserve the "zebra" striped crosswalks for school zones. Ed said that was pretty much up to the Committee. It just so happened that the internal ODOT group met first. They will meet again and can consider further input from the OTCDC.

Ed Chastain had a concern regarding truck usage of lanes in the roundabout. The interior truck apron is planned to accommodate off-tracking of trucks, but this seemed in conflict with lane markings. He was concerned that unwary cars might pull up alongside trucks and get displaced by the trucks. Ed Fischer said the subcommittee pretty much knew that trucks would use both lanes and that one of the regulatory changes that's being looked at is to prohibit passing within the circular roadway.

Committee consensus was that raised markers should only be an option since snowplows and normal tire traffic would scrape or knock them off in short order. It was also suggested that illumination would help obviate the need for marking and also reduce the visibility of reflective markers.

The Committee agreed that if the new MUTCD illustrated roundabouts with shark's teeth yield markers without noting them as optional, then ODOT would have to take exception in the Oregon Supplement to the MUTCD.

Roundabout Driver Right-of-Way Draft Language

Ed Fischer went on to address the work of the Roundabout Subcommittee on changes needed in the law to accommodate operation of roundabouts in a handout prepared by Rick Wood.

Rick Wood pointed out that proposed ORS 801.452 definition of "Roundabout" codifies the roundabout as a single intersection as opposed to a combination of "T" intersections. This incorporates FHWA guidance and makes the definition a little "cleaner".

Where crosswalks are included in the roundabout design, they are considered part of the roundabout.

The definition of Failure to yield right of way within a roundabout was discussed, including the word, "lawfully" and whether the word needs further definition. Ed Fischer suggested it will be defined when lane control signs are installed. The requirement to use a signal when exiting was also considered part of "lawfully". Exceptions to the general layout of multi-lane roundabouts may occur but the subcommittee tried to be careful not to define by the exceptions. Ed Fischer said there was some discussion on whether the word "accident" or "collision" ought to be used in the second paragraph of the Failure to yield definition. There will be more discussion by the subcommittee on this definition.

Ed Fischer said definition of Improper use of the circulatory roadway within a roundabout in the next proposed ORS 811.378 was to make clear that passing within the circulatory roadway is prohibited. The question of whether bicycles were considered in this definition brought up the suggestion that "vehicle" should be supplemented to read "motor vehicle". The design speed of roundabouts was discussed and the fact that larger versions of this roadway design do not really meet the definition of the modern roundabout. More discussion will also be done on this definition.

Going back to the definition of "Roundabout" there was discussion on whether unmarked crosswalks were included in the definition as they are in other intersections where crosswalks are considered to be there whether or not they are marked and in the absence of crosswalk closure signage. This discussion was continued into discussion of proposed changes to ORS 801.220's definition of a crosswalk. It is intended that such crosswalks are present in the absence of other marked crosswalks with the exception of any crosswalks into/crossing the circulatory roadway. It was agreed that the wording should be changed from "along" to "that crosses" in the proposed new paragraph (3) to clarify that there is no crosswalk *across* the circulatory roadway.

Further discussion ensued on whether the definitions of "Circulatory Roadway" and "Roundabout" are sufficient, whether the definition of "Central Island" ought to be included, and what rewriting would be done by legislative staff and the Legislature. It was also agreed that the

definition of roundabout should be clear in including the splitter island. The draft legislation subcommittee will meet again December 12th to further discuss these issues.

New Business

Animal-Vehicle Crash Mitigation Project

Kevin Haas gave a PowerPoint presentation on the demonstration project, a federally sponsored joint effort between ODOT, the Western Transportation Institute, the ODFW, and the USFS. The Oregon demonstration site selected is on US 97 at Lava Butte. It is hoped to use advanced technology to cut down on accidents with larger animals such as deer. They will be using various electronic detectors, coupled with signage to warn drivers when the animals are in the area of the roadway. Mike and Stephen Wilson (no known relationship) expressed particular interest in the project and the Committee asked that they be updated in 8 months or so on progress obtained.

Mule Deer Migratory Signing Project

Stephen Wilson briefed the Committee on a pilot project with the ODFW on a site in the Bend/Sisters area with signs that indicate the probability of migrating deer, low/medium/high. They are currently in negotiations over who will be responsible for installing, maintaining and evaluating the utility of these signs. ODOT will not be involved in any of those activities.

OTCDC 2001 Meeting Schedule

Gary Judd brought out the proposed schedule for next year's OTCDC meetings and suggested scheduling an OTCDC meeting in October jointly with an ODOT/ACTS annual safety conference. Ed Fischer moved and Joe Marek seconded changing the September 21 meeting to October 16th. jointly with the ODOT/ACTS meeting. Motion carried. It was noted that in the absence of any pressing agenda items, the November meeting may be cancelled as well.

Nominations for Chair & Vice Chair

Gary Judd opened nominations for Chair. Ed Fischer nominated Stephen Wilson. Stephen was acclaimed unanimously to replace Chairperson Judd. When nominations were opened for Vice Chair, Rob Burchfield volunteered and was similarly acclaimed as Vice Chair, filling the slot left vacant by Gary Ludeke's retirement.

Non-Agenda Items

Rob Burchfield asked if there are any ODOT standards on mountable curbs for access control and was pointed to ODOT's Standard Plans .

Meeting Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 11:34 a.m. The next meeting will be held on January 19, 2001 at 9:00 a.m. at Marion County Public Works, 5155 Silverton Road, Salem Oregon.