## Historic Columbia River Highway Advisory Committee Meeting

**SUMMARY**

**June 8, 2017**

**Discovery Center**

**The Dalles, OR**

| Members Attending: | Wayne Stewart, Chair  
                        | William Pattison, Vice-chair  
                        | Arthur Babitz  
                        | Kevin Price (OPRD)  
                        | Francie Royce  
                        | Judy Davis  
                        | Mandy Putney (ODOT Alternate)  
                        | Marc Berry – Emeritus  
                        | Art Carrol – Emeritus |
|--------------------|-------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| HCRH AC Staff:     | Kristen Stallman (ODOT)  
                        | Sandra Hikari (ODOT)  
                        | Susan Hanson (ODOT) |
| Others Attending: | David Spangler (OPRD)  
                        | Jeanette Kloos (FHCRH)  
                        | Richard Alfieri  
                        | Bonnie Clark  
                        | Terra Lingley (ODOT)  
                        | Dick Weber  
                        | Pat Cimmiyotti (ODOT)  
                        | Morai Helfin (USFS)  
                        | Kevin Liburdy (City of Hood River)  
                        | Stan Hinatsu (USFS)  
                        | Knud Martin (WFLHD)  
                        | Brie Van Cleave (WFLHD)  
                        | Kathy Fitzpatrick (City of Mosier)  
                        | R.M. “Sam” Grotte  
                        | Dan Hoyt (MCEDD)  
                        | Terry Anderson  
                        | Al Gillis  
                        | Brad DeHart  
                        | Steve Tessmer  
                        | Katherine Agnew  
                        | Paul Landau (PLSO) |
Call to Order
Wayne Stewart, chair, called the meeting to order.

Approval of Minutes
Approved including Jeanette Kloos’ submitted corrections.

Opportunity for Public Comment
Steve Tessmer, Columbia Cliff Villas in Hood River, requested Advisory Committee to discuss a proposed pedestrian connection over exit 62 in Hood River that will link Westcliff Drive to Cascade Avenue at a future meeting.

Advisory Committee Elections
The committee submitted ballots. The outcome of the election was Arthur Babitz, Chair and Wayne Stewart, Vice-Chair. Elections occur every two years at the June meeting according to the bylaws.

Hood River Westside Concept Plan
Kevin Liburdy, City of Hood River, provided a brief update on the Westside Concept Plan. He explained how the intersection of Mt. Adams and Cascade Avenue performs in the future with the new land uses. A roundabout concept is being revisited as an option. Both options in the Transportation System Plan (TSP) includes an eastbound free right turn from Cascade Ave. onto Mt. Adams Ave. At this time, the traffic flows into the neighborhood and surrounding area are being assessed. The decision will be going to city council in the future. Kristen added that ODOT as the facility owner will also be weighing in.

Francie wondered how the neighborhood near the intersection will be affected by the traffic. Kevin responded that the zoning is general commercial and there may be some zoning amendments to prevent drive-through uses to reduce traffic. Marc asked about timelines. Kevin said he will be working on the implementation process after August, but that will still be months out. The next set of advisory committees June 29th, also will be discussing funding mechanism and working with city council to finalize the process.

Bill added that what we see is the availability of land for a roundabout. Kevin responded that it would be shifted to the southeast where there is still some property. There was a public comment stating the intersection was just revamped four years ago, do we really need to redo it? Kristen added that a signal is also an alternative in addition to the roundabout. Jeanette was surprised that the historic analysis hasn’t happened yet and thinks that this would impact the decisions. Arthur asked that she send a letter to Kevin to encourage a thorough historical assessment.

Rowena Rock Fall
Pat Cimmiyotti shared an update on the recent rock fall along the Historic Highway causing a closure near Rowena. Bill Pattison asked if they could anticipate future rock falls. In response, this fix was only a small area. Pat added that it is difficult to anticipate with all the weather and freeze thaw conditions. Arthur added that the City of Hood River was impressed that it was fixed so quickly. Pat added that the design happened on the fly with contractors implementing on the ground. The total cost of the work was about $25,000. There is still some paving work that needs to happen in June and he will get back to
Jeanette on the schedule for the Gorge Ride (June 17th). The Chenoweth Bridge project’s old white guardrail will be recycled at this site.

**Mosier Derailment Reclamation Plan**

Kathy Fitzpatrick, Mosier City Manager, gave an overview of the impacts and the potential mitigation related to the UPRR oil train derailment in Mosier. She explained that this incident interfered with the aesthetic and transportation functions of Rock Creek Road, the Historic Highway. Now without vegetation in this area, cars are moving faster and pedestrians are now walking on the highway whereas before they were walking along a small path along the shoulder of the roadway. Walkers are typically headed to the beach or the Twin Tunnels. Many of them are community members. The Twin Tunnels trail is used by the local school as a lifestyle program activity. Kathy is currently discussing restoration with DEQ and Union Pacific. We cannot bring back the mature trees so we are proposing the use of the Historic Highway design elements such as rockwork to bring back beauty and to slow traffic to improve the experience for pedestrians and cyclists. Mosier is currently updating their TSP, so this process is being used to discuss various concept plans. ODOT landscape architects, Bob Marshall and Magnus Bernhardt developed conceptual plans to revegetate the area that includes a new pedestrian path. Wayne asked if the soil conditions were affected. Kathy responded that 600 tons of soil was removed and was replaced with gravel, so the area looks very different than before. Previously, the area was contoured throughout, but now it’s very flat. Soil will have to be brought back to recreate the contours. Union Pacific will restore the site to conditions better than before. Jeanette Kloos supports the recommendation for the installation of white fence guardrail along the curve. The path would be used just for pedestrians, not cyclists.

Union Pacific replaced the faulty rail attachments with a different type. The speed of the train was quite slow during the incident, but slower speed doesn’t ensure safety with oil trains. The distance of the fence to the train track is at its original location about 20-30 ft at the narrowest in some areas and not the usual 50 ft easement.

Humble Roots, a Mosier nursery and Mike Igo native plant specialist are assisting with the selection of native plants. Kevin Price suggested that Union Pacific be responsible for the plants through plant establishment.

**East Mitchell Point**

Kristen provided an update on the meeting with the East Mitchell Point neighbors. The meeting had a good turnout of 8 people. Kristen did a presentation of the different Mitchell Point Crossing alternatives. The purpose of the meeting was to lay the groundwork to communicate the ongoing design work. The public shared their concerns around privacy and safety. Mitchell Point Drive is on ODOT right of way. The safety of the undercrossing was mentioned as it exists today with ice, snow, sharp turns, issues with school bus etc. There likely be additional safety conflicts as more pedestrians and cyclists start using this roadway.

Funding for the Mitchell Point Crossing has been secured a through FLAP grant. An alternatives analysis will be complete this coming spring. WSP (formerly Parsons Brinkerhoff) is the consultant chosen to work on the project. One of the first things will do is geotechnical investigation. A NSA permit has been submitted to Hood River County. The design alternatives will need to be reviewed by the Advisory
Committee at the March 2018 meeting. The Advisory Committee will make a recommendation to ODOT and OPRD. The decision makers of the alternatives will be Rian Windshiemer, ODOT Region 1 manager and Lisa Sumption, OPRD Director. John Horn WSP’s tunnel expert will be the project team lead. Morai Helfin, USFS, requested that public involvement be part of the recommendation of alternatives.

David Spangler mentioned that even Hole-in-the-Wall Falls without a complete trail connection, the trail and small parking lot, gets a lot of use so once the Mitchell Point Crossing is connected the parking lot will get even more use. He will send pictures for the Advisory Committee to see.

**Chenoweth, Dry Canyon and Mosier Bridges Update**
Brad DeHart provided a quick update. This project was awarded to Wildish Construction. Work is starting at all three sites in the next three weeks. This includes repairing concrete on the bridges and the repairing the surface at Mosier and Dry Canyon and replacement of the Chenoweth Creek Bridge. Road closures are likely to start during the first three weeks in August. ODOT will use social media to get the word out about closure dates. The detour route is to go to I-84, get off at Rowena and come back on the Historic Highway. A gravel road access will be available for emergency vehicles at all times. In the plans there are signs to detour cyclists through the riverfront trail.

**Chenoweth Pit Clean Up**
Brad DeHart provided an update on this project. There has been no construction work on the project except for the removal and decommissioning of a shallow groundwater sampling well earlier this spring. We developed and put out for bid a project that would have screened out the larger rocks from the finer soils that contain the lead bullets and lead shot. That finer material was then to be treated to ‘fixate’ (make inert) the lead material so that it could then be hauled to the local landfill as solid waste. This plan had been approved and permitted through DEQ as well as Wasco County. However, the bids for the work came in substantially higher than we had anticipated and beyond our available funding. We have since re-engaged the services of a consultant with expertise in this type of cleanup to assist us in revising the plan some while also seeking additional funding with the intent to still perform the cleanup. Currently there is additional sampling and testing of on-site materials to more clearly define and reduce the volume and extent of the area that needs to be cleaned. We anticipate going back out for bids later this winter for construction next spring.

**Historic Highway State Trail Wyeth Trailhead to Lindsey Creek**
Knud presented an overview of the design for the current State Trail construction project. He responded to several questions:

- Lane closures for I-84 eastbound will start in September.
- The 12’ trail width plus 2’ shy on each side along the entire trail including the bridges should be enough room for bikes and pedestrians.
- They will try to keep roots out along the trail by adding free draining material such as gravel on sides of the trail.
- The wagon trail on Shellrock Mountain will be separated by a berm and trees to make an obstacle course so it doesn’t encourage people to use the wagon trail.
- Advisory Committee State Trail walk-throughs will begin in July.
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- Trail construction completion date is June 2019.

**HCRH Values Discussion Summary**
- Refer back to the legislative purpose and add it to the statement of intent.
- The Advisory Committee (AC) has a function beyond the reconnection of the State Trail, is also involved with anything that touches or affects the Historic Highway.
- We should make a distinction between the State Trail and the Historic Highway. There are conflicts between the users.
- The mission, purpose and values are what we use to carry out the AC’s role.
- We are missing an ongoing action to preserve the Historic Highway and State Trail.
- Preserve and restore should be added to design sensitivity.
- The distinctions between trail and highway need to be clear and the trail is limited to pedestrians and bicyclists.
- We may want to consider public safety as a separate part of the congestion issue.
- In the scenic beauty section, we should add some language about maintaining the beauty spots.
- We should cut out “fish and wildlife.”
- Include wording about long-term vision as our focus is not just short-term.

Send comments regarding the Values to Kristen by June 22nd.

**Staff Updates**

*Friends of the Historic Columbia River Highway* – Jeanette distributed a list of activities.

*ODOT Maintenance* – Kent Kalsch provided an update on Coopey Quarry. They will be hauling local material back in there upon approval of NSA permit. Larch Mountain Slide - $0.5 million is spent every 5 years on slides. Instead of filling the low spots, the process has been to scrape the high spots and repave. ODOT is looking at long term fix which may include a viaduct.

*OPRD* – Kevin Price, the Mark O. Hatfield West Trailhead septic field has been repaired and restrooms are now working. New staff member, Miranda Mendoza, is the new interpretive ranger who took over for Dorothy Brown-Kwaiser. Seasonal staff orientation is next week, afterward OPRD will be working full force. The work trailer for the State Trail construction is getting permitted and moving onto OPRD property. The Aug 21st eclipse will be drawing crowds and will be seeing unprecedented numbers. David Spangler is the new manager for the east end of the Gorge. He was formerly at Cottonwood Canyon State Park.

*Travel Oregon* – No comments

*Forest Service* – The Rotary wheel was installed at Wahkeena Falls and there will be a Rotary Club event to introduce the wheel.

*WFLHD* – No comments

*ODOT*
Congestion Mitigation Study – Terra Lingley shared that the RFP was released and they have chosen a consultant. Kristen is negotiating a contract with CH2Mhill. In the meantime, we have met with project partners. Terra is working on the public involvement plan to engage various groups. Stakeholder interviews will be conducted and agency coordination will be vital for the plan implementation. This project will entail the following:

- Analysis of existing conditions – traffic analysis and counts, adding other locations, car counts, etc. to develop a baseline for future analysis.
- Public outreach
- Developing alternatives

Roundtable

- Kevin is thankful for the partnerships
- Francie was surprised at amount of hikers on the State Trail, she was surprised at the diversity of trail users.
- Marc shared that the City of Mosier now has electric bicycles for rent. Kevin responded that electric bicycles are allowed on the State Trail if they are pedal assisted.
- Wayne shared that at the last meeting there was a request for a letter of support for the bicycle facility at the Bridge of the Gods.
- Bill inquired about the viewshed management project. Kevin Price mentioned major ($10,000 +) and minor preventative projects. He has dedicated $19,000 for each biennium for hazardous trees and viewshed projects. He explained he enjoyed his leadership role on the HCRH advisory committee and looks forward to being a regular committee member.
- Mandy Putney thanked the partners for their participation.
- Kristen showed the Heritage Excellence award that ODOT and HCRH advisory committee received for the great work with the 2016 Centennial Celebration.

Next Meetings

**Third Thursdays of March, June, September and December**

- September 21st - Hood River
- December 14th - Cascade Locks Community Center
- March 15th - Corbett Fire Station
- June 21st - The Dalles